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# Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
HA-05 COME-00 EB-08 LAB-04 SIL-01 /084 W
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P 062146Z SEP 78
FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8567
INFO AMCONSUL MONTREAL
AMCONSUL QUEBEC
AMCONSUL TORONTO
ALL OTHER CANADIAN POSTS POUCH

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINR, CA
SUBJECT: GALLUP POLL SHOWS LIBERALS WIDENING LEAD OVERALL BUT SLIPPING IN STRATEGIC ONTARIO

1. SUMMARY: LATEST GALLUP POLL SHOWS LIBERALS LEADING CONSERVATIVES (PC) BY TEN POINTS, BUT FALLING BELOW 1974 ELECTION STANDING IN ONTARIO, WHICH COULD DETERMINE WINNER OF NEXT GENERAL ELECTION IF PARTY BALANCE REMAINS ROUGHLY STABLE ELSEWHERE. WITH THESE POLL RESULTS ON HEELS OF PRIME MINISTER'S DECISION TO SCHEDULE ELECTIONS FOR 15 VACANT SEATS ON OCTOBER 16, ODDS ON FALL GENERAL ELECTIONS HAVE DROPPED SHARPLY. END SUMMARY.

2. LATEST GALLUP POLL RELEASED SEPT. 6 SHOWS OVERALL INCREASE IN LIBERAL STRENGTH BUT CONTINUED SLIPPAGE BY GOVERNING PARTY IN ONTARIO. POLL, CONDUCTED JUST AFTER PRIME MINISTER'S NATIONAL TELEVISION ADDRESS IN EARLY AUGUST (OTTAWA 3857), GIVES LIBERALS 45 PERCENT OF DECIDED VOTES, WITH 35 PERCENT FOR PC AND 15 PERCENT
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FOR NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY (NDP). LIBERALS HAVE STRETCHED POLLING LEAD TO TEN PERCENT, UP FROM EIGHT POINTS IN JULY (OTTAWA 3948) AND CONTRASTING WITH TIE AT 41 PERCENT EACH FOR LIBERALS AND TORIES WHICH GALLUP REPORTED LAST APRIL.

3. HOWEVER, AGGREGATE GALLUP RESULTS ARE MISLEADING

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GAUGE OF LIBERAL ELECTORAL PROSPECTS. FIRST, FULLY 33 PERCENT OF VOTERS ARE UNDECIDED. SECOND, GALLUP FINDINGS CONFIRM VIEW OF PARTY STRATEGISTS THAT RECENT LIBERAL GAINS ARE CONCENTRATED IN QUEBEC, WHERE PARTY NOW STANDS SIGNIFICANTLY ABOVE 1974 RESULTS WHEN IT WON 60 OF PROVINCE'S 74 SEATS. LIBERALS THUS ALREADY HAVE STRANGLE-HOLD ON PROVINCE AND FURTHER GAINS THERE AMOUNT TO OVER-KILL.

4. IN ONTARIO, BY CONTRAST, POLL REPORTEDLY FINDS THAT LIBERAL DROP BELOW 1974 SHOWING (WHEN PARTY WON 55 OF 85 SEATS) IS APPROACHING SIGNIFICANT DIMENSIONS. THIS BEARS OUT PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS OF MANY POLITICAL OBSERVERS AND, IT IS RUMORED, CORRESPONDS WITH FINDINGS OF LIBERALS' RECENTLY COMPLETED PRIVATE SAMPLING IN AREA. WITH ONTARIO ACCOUNTING FOR JUST OVER ONE-THIRD OF EXPANDED PARLIAMENT WHICH WILL BE FORMED AFTER NEXT GENERAL ELECTION, SIGNIFICANT PC GAINS IN PROVINCE COULD PUT LIBERALS INTO MINORITY GOVERNMENT POSITION OR WORSE.

5. WHILE GALLUP POLL PRECEDED MONTH OF MINISTERIAL DECLARATIONS ON NEW ECONOMIC AND FISCAL POLICIES WHICH FOLLOWED TRUDEAU'S AUGUST 1 TV APPEARANCE, THOSE ANNOUNCEMENTS HAVE GONE OVER LIKE LEAD BALLOON IN MEDIA, AT LEAST, AND EVEN OFFICIALS IN PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE ACKNOWLEDGE THAT PUBLIC REACTION HAS NOT BEEN FAVORABLE
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AND THAT EPISODE HAS LEFT GOVERNMENT WITH SERIOUS CREDIBILITY PROBLEM TO OVERCOME.

6. ODDS BEING GIVEN ON FALL ELECTIONS HAVE THUS DROPPED SHARPLY IN OTTAWA IN WEEK SINCE PRIME MINISTER SCHEDULED BY-ELECTIONS FOR ALL 15 VACANT HOUSE OF COMMONS SEATS FOR OCTOBER 16 (OTTAWA 4321). INITIAL REACTION TO LATEST POLL RESULTS IS THAT THEY WILL FURTHER DAMPEN ANY REMAINING INCLINATION TOWARD CALLING FALL GENERAL ELECTIONS.
ENDERS

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# Message Attributes

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**Draft Date:** 06 sep 1978
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960
**Decaption Note:**
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW
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**TAGS:** PINR, CA
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